

FAMILY INFORMATION SHEET



Cannabis

What is cannabis?

Cannabis comes from a variety of hemp plants called Cannabis Sativa. Marijuana is the most common form of cannabis and is made from the leaves and flowers. It has many street names eg weed, grass, mull, dope, gunja. Hashish and hashish oil come from the resin of the flowering tops of the female plants.

Cannabis, like alcohol, is a depressant drug which means it slows down the nerve messages to and from the brain. The immediate physical effects of a small dose can include a feeling of wellbeing, loss of concentration, increased appetite, red eyes, poor balance and coordination. Larger doses can cause hallucinations making people see and hear things that are not there, and panic attacks.

Some of the long-term effects can include increased risk of bronchitis and lung cancer, lack of motivation, lowered sex drive and hormone production. Those who use cannabis, even in small amounts, may develop mental health conditions or have problems with their memory and mood swings. This risk increases the earlier you start and the more you use.

Why cannabis education for your children?

Cannabis is the most widely used illegal drug in Australia. Cannabis is also the drug that many young people in WA use.

Some parents may have concerns about providing information about cannabis to their teenager. However, research shows that being taught about the harmful effects of using cannabis before they are exposed to it through either their own use or other people's use, can have a positive effect.

What will your children learn about cannabis in their classroom program?

- The possible harmful effects and consequences of using cannabis.
- The WA laws about cannabis and synthetic cannabis.
- How to use refusal strategies in situations where other people may be using cannabis.

What you can do?

Having negative attitudes towards cannabis can also help to protect your teenager from using this drug and protect them from the harms of other people's cannabis use. Talk to your teenager and let them know what you think about cannabis and the rules you have about cannabis use in your family.



For more information about cannabis

Drug Aware drugaware.com.au

National Cannabis Prevention and Information Centre
ncpic.org.au

Australian Drug Foundation www.adf.org.au

Alcohol and Drug Support Line is a free 24-hour, state-wide, confidential telephone service where you can talk to a professionally trained counsellor about your own or another's alcohol or drug use.

Phone: (08) 9442 5000

Country callers: 1800 198 024

E-mail: alcoholdrugsupport@mhc.wa.gov.au

Parent and Family Drug Support Line is a free alcohol and other drug information and support line for parents and family members. Talk to a professionally trained counsellor about alcohol and other drugs. Talk confidentially to another parent for strategies and support.

Phone: (08) 9442 5050

Country callers: 1800 653 203

Email: alcoholdrugsupport@mhc.wa.gov.au

Aboriginal Alcohol and Drug Service provides a range of culturally secure services, including treatment, education programs and yarning.

Phone: (08) 9221 1411

It is against the law to possess, use, supply, grow or import cannabis in Australia.